

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend the title on page 1 of the specification as follows.

~~Method for producing fine metal, alloy and composite powders~~

**METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF FINE METAL POWDER, ALLOY POWDER  
AND COMPOSITE POWDER**

Please insert the following at line 2 on page 1 of the specification.

**--FIELD OF THE INVENTION--**

Please insert the following at line 7 on page 1 of the specification.

**--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--**

Please insert the following at line 10 on page 5 of the specification.

**--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--**

Please insert the following as a separate section between page 6, line 4 of the specification.

**--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

- Figure 1 is a scanning electron microscope ("SEM") image (magnification = 300X) of a starting (or feed) nickel alloy powder;
- Figure 2 is an SEM image (magnification = 300X) of flakes resulting from a deformation process step performed on starting nickel alloy powder;
- Figure 3 is an SEM image (magnification = 1000X) of material obtained from comminution grinding of flakes obtained from a deformation process of starting nickel alloy powder;
- Figure 4 includes representative particle size distribution plots of deagglomerated primary nickel alloy particles that were deagglomerated by means of ultrasound treatment of agglomerated primary particles in isopropanol;

- Figure 5 includes representative particle size distribution plots of deagglomerated primary nickel alloy particles that were deagglomerated by subjecting agglomerated primary particles to gas contrajet mill treatment followed by ultrasound treatment in isopropanol;
- Figure 6 is an SEM image (magnification = 600X) of deagglomerated nickel alloy particles after being subjected to gas contrajet mill treatment; and
- Figure 7 is a representative plot of contraction (S) and contraction rate (AS) for a comparative powder (V) and a powder prepared according to the present invention (PZD) as a function of standardized temperature ( $T_N$ ).

For a further detailed discussion of Figures 1-6, see Example 1 herein.--

Please insert the following at the top of page 7 of the specification.

**--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--**

Please include the following abstract with the application. An abstract is included herewith on a separate sheet of paper.

**--METHOD FOR THE PRODUCTION OF FINE METAL POWDER, ALLOY POWDER AND COMPOSITE POWDER**

**ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION**

There is provided a method of producing a metal powder, alloy powder or composite powder having a mean particle diameter D50 of less than or equal to 25  $\mu\text{m}$ , as determined using a particle size measuring apparatus (e.g., a MICROTRAC X 100 particle size measuring apparatus) in accordance with ASTM C 1070-01. The method includes, first providing a starting powder having a mean particle diameter D50 of greater than 25  $\mu\text{m}$ . The starting powder is then subjected to a deformation step, thereby forming flake-like particles having a particle diameter to particle thickness ratio of between 10:1 and 10,000:1. The flake-like particles are then subjected to comminution grinding in the presence of a grinding aid.--